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37.—The Rev. W. A. O'Connor.
38.—Taking Holy Orders under Bishop Lee.
38.—A Children's Chapel (Rusholme Road Independent).
39.—The Swedenborgians (Rev. John Hyde).
41.—St. Mary's, Hulme (Rev. F. C. Woodhouse.)
41 —The Stowell Memorial Church.
42.—Birch Church (Rev. Canon Anson).
43.—An Evening with the Christian Brethren.
45.—Manchester Cathedral.
45.—Sale Independent Chapel (Rev. Edward Morris).
46.—The German Church, Greenheys.
47.—Ritualism in Manchester (St. John Baptist's).
48.—St. Saviour's Church Rev W. F. Birch).
50.—The Rev. J. A. Gardiner (Presbyterian).
51.—Church Music in Manchester (Holy Trinity, Hulme, and the Jesuit Church).
52.—A Morning with the Baptists (Rev. H. J. Betts).
53.—The Church of the Ascension (Rev. C. T. Watson).
53.—Northen Churchyard.
54.—The Wesleyan College, Didsbury.
55.—St. Michael's and its Rector (Rev. G. S. Allen).
58.—Great Fast of the Jews.
59.—Deserted Churches: 1. St. Clement's.
60.—The Rev. J. A. Macfadyen.
61.—Deserted Churches: 2. St. Mary's.
62.—The Rev. G. W. Conder.
65.—Deserted Churches: 3. Sacred Trinity, Salford.
67.—Cheerybles Brothers' Church.
68.—A Visit to the Parish Church, Ashton-under-Lyne.

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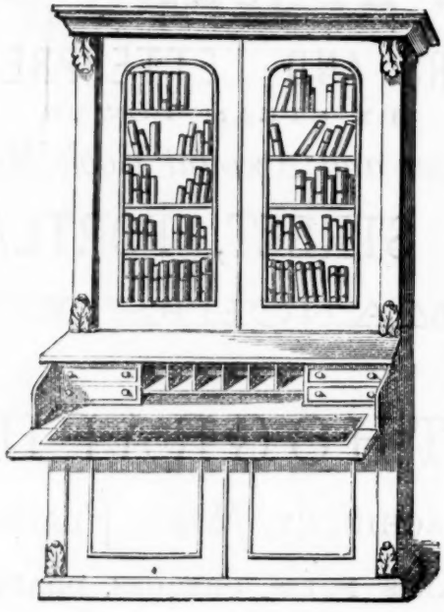

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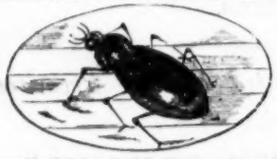

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THE BLIND ASYLUM CHAPEL.

REV. W. H. ROGERS, M.A.

THOSE members of the Church of England who reside in the neighbourhood of Old Trafford have at length got a stated pastor to minister to them. That is, perhaps, rather a Dissenting way of putting it, but it is the best we can find to describe a happy deliverance from a very unpleasant dilemma. It may be in the recollection of our readers that, nine months ago, the congregation at the Blind Asylum Chapel, which was then and is still the only Church congregation in the vicinity, were relying for their Sabbath ordinances upon hap-hazard divines who were ready to "take the duty"—as it is termed—for a consideration, but who knew nothing of the people, and who could scarcely be expected to discharge those parish duties which occupy so much of the time of a conscientious clergyman. So, virtually, the people at Old Trafford were as sheep having no shepherd, and, strange to say, it was the Bishop who would not let them have one. This was the explanation we received at the time, but it was difficult to believe it. Very judicious bottle-holding had to be gone through to get the Bishop's head to the wind, yet he at length, after saying he "would ne'er consent, consented." We have been told that the Bishop "winks" at the situation—that is the exact phrase in which the situation was described to us. But, although winking is not a pastime forbidden by the fathers of the church, it is one which should be very judiciously exercised, and perhaps it has been so in this case.

We do not understand that the Bishop appointed the Rev. W. H. Rogers, but that the rev. gentleman was selected by a committee composed of the representatives of the twin institutions for whose benefit the chapel was first erected. Of whomsoever the selecting committee may have consisted, we think they may be congratulated upon their choice, and that is, apparently, the general verdict of the neighbourhood. For whereas, prior to the appointment, or rather the appearance, of the present incumbent, the former pew-holders were, many of them, leaving the church, we are told that at present there is not a sitting to be obtained. Such is one of the blessed results of episcopal winking—an easy process—a pleasant process—a beneficent process. We should not feel surprised if the Bishop were ultimately caught "winking" at a lay deaconess. We hope and trust it may be the good fortune of Mr. Rogers to assuage the ill feeling and the bad blood which have attended the past history of the institutions, and that to him may be accorded the blessing which is said to wait upon the peacemaker. From all that we can see, and from all that we can hear, the rev. gentleman appears eminently fitted for the task. He has youth on his side; a pleasing presence; a suave and modest demeanour, and considerable energy; and he brings—as the phrase goes—an excellent character from his last place. It may perhaps say little for any good-looking young curate that, in these days of testimonials, he should have received illuminated scrolls and well-filled purses from the people amongst whom he has ministered; yet these, if they have not a positive, have at least a negative value, and both the people of Withington and those of Wilmslow have, to that extent, testified to the good qualities of their former curate.

The services at the Chapel of St. Thomas, with some few exceptions—which it would be invidious to notice, and with which, perhaps—we need not meddle now, are very well conducted. The critics who now almost perpetually lie in wait to detect flaws in the performance of the liturgy of the church, would, we fancy, have a sinecure at Old Trafford. To us, at all events, there is an unusual interest in the choral services of our church, when conducted by the blind. "The sightless eyeballs" seem to light up, as it were, with a melancholy lustre when the solemn psalm and soothing anthem are chanted; and one feels happy in the thought that those whom God has afflicted with the loss of vision should gain solace and consolation from the divine exercises of music consecrated to His service. After a week's whirl of business anxiety, it is a pleasant thing on a Sunday evening to sit and listen to the anthem which always forms part of the service at evening prayer.

The pulpit ministrations of Mr. Rogers are decidedly above the average. His discourses are very clear and very practical; his manner is affectionate and persuasive. The sermons bear the evidence of careful study; we venture to think they would be better if they were less so. Delivered apparently extempore, the memorité attribute is now and again too prominent to be pleasant, thus giving occasionally a stiffness and constraint to the style which a less careful preparation would tend to soften. Still we hesitate to criticize the conscientiousness which underlies all this. Mr. Rogers believes in his mission, and wants to make it out for the best. In the attainment of this end it is clear that he expends much thought and labour and time, and it would be wrong to say that he is not successful, for his sentences are almost perfect in their construction, and his expositions could not be clearer if they had been laboriously committed to paper and were never read from the manuscript. But as the subject is always so accurately mapped out and quadrated in the preacher's mind, we believe (and we say it with great deference) that he would do more justice to his subject, to his hearers and to himself, if he allowed the interstices to be filled up as he went along—not surely a difficult task for one whose command of language is so great as that of Mr. Rogers. The action and gestures of the reverend gentleman in the pulpit do not always accord with his matter, simply because they do not always spring from the matter, but are brought to it. He has all the qualities which would give to a sermon less artificially prepared a charm not too frequently met with now-a-days. His voice is rich without being resonant, and, as we have already remarked, he has a goodly presence and a winning style, which, we take leave to say, are sometimes, not always, let down and diluted by the anxious and, no doubt, well-meant attempt to repeat a carefully-prepared essay by heart. Probably the congregation, as a whole, do not feel as we do upon the subject, for they are as attentive as any preacher could expect, if not desire, and from all sides we get testimony to the acceptance with which, so far, the sermons of the reverend gentleman have been received. Mr. Rogers is obviously no friend of polemical or controversial sermons. He proceeds upon the principle that "by their faith ye shall know them, and that "by their faith," or otherwise, must the great issue be worked out. He leans towards the teaching of Him who spake as never man spake, and who illustrated the great art of oral instruction by the Sermon on the Mount. In his parochial visits—if they may be called such where no parish exists—his quiet, friendly manner and ready humour, just flavoured sufficiently with

the picturesque way of putting things proper to the sister country, of which he is a native, make him always welcome, whilst to sick persons and young children, and all who are desolate and afflicted he comes, not simply as a priest of the church, but as a sympathizing and humane friend.

What power these men have if they only knew it, and knew always how to exercise it! When they do exercise it in the true spirit of their high vocation, how great must be their reward! Adopting in their heart of hearts the great verities of the Christian faith, and having time and opportunity and faculty for proclaiming them, and an earnest desire to practice and to live by them, surely there can be few situations in the world comparable to that. It is the misfortune of the clerical calling that so many *are* called, and so few chosen. But let the chosen ones take heart. Amidst all the disruptions which shake the fabric of spiritual thought in these days, the real succession of the Apostles may rest satisfied of this—that, though the heathen, both at home and abroad, may rage, and the people imagine a vain thing, there is something about a Christian minister whose life illustrates his teaching which will ever command the respect, if not the attention, of them all.

[MANCHESTER BANKS.]

THE CONSOLIDATED.

THOSE who have read the series of articles which we have written upon the Banks of Manchester may have gathered, from the seven preceding papers, that these establishments have various characteristics peculiar to themselves, although they may have been founded for the common purpose of making money for their proprietors by the legitimate business of banking—that is to say, using their own capital, *plus* that of other people (lent to them in the shape of deposits), to make advances, discount bills, and conduct other financial operations. Upon some of those characteristics, regarded from a common point of view, and compared or contrasted with each other, we shall have more to say presently. Like the human face divine, or the leaves on the trees of the forest, banks all resemble each other, yet no two are precisely alike.

Perhaps, of all the Manchester banks, the Consolidated, from its first origin above forty years since, and including its various ramifications and amalgamations, has had the most eventful history of any of them. As Mephistopheles says of himself in *Faust*, its "career has been a checkered one"—perhaps it would be more appropriate to the subject to spell the word "chequered." An intimation is conveyed to the public in a very simple manner, by a few words painted upon the Bank's door, that the Consolidated Bank, Limited, was originally the Bank of Manchester. But besides this alteration or absorption, it has, in the course of years, been amalgamated with four other banks, private and joint-stock. Like a Christmas plum-pudding, it is composed of many ingredients, and a few years ago, in the summer of 1866, either because the pudding was out of season, or owing to the last portion of the mixture being too highly spiced, or from a surfeit of it, we cannot precisely say which, the unctuous compound agreed very badly with the proprietors, and they, after having been very bilious and uncomfortable for some days, got rid of their nausea by the usual arrangements of nature, by shutting up and disgorging. The untoward occurrence of a suspension was speedily got over by the judgment and good management of the directors, assisted by the forbearance of the Bank's customers, who accepted promissory notes for their deposits, and in a few months they were all paid with interest. Thus, the patient yielded to active medical treatment, and recovered.

But we are anticipating events, as, in its infancy, the original bank was afflicted with a complaint of a similar nature. The Bank of Manchester, now absorbed in the Consolidated, was, we believe, the first joint-stock bank in Manchester, having been founded so long ago as 1828. The science of banking appears to have been little understood at that time in Manchester by joint-stock directors. Like some of its neighbours, the Bank of Manchester made heavy advances to its customers, either without any, or with what is almost, if not quite as bad, inefficient security. Originally it was a bank of issue, and we have heard it stated upon good authority that, at one time, it actually allowed some of its customers to fill up blank drafts or post bills, already bearing the bank's signature, merely getting an advice note of the sums drawn sent in to the office at the close of business hours. No wonder that the bank made heavy losses, and some seven and twenty years ago, although we believed it never actually stopped, it suddenly gave over doing business, and Burdekin, its manager, bolted. Whether he was ever looked for or not we cannot say, but it does not appear that any vigorous search was made for him. The directors of the bank, however, being mostly men of substance, with the assistance of the other proprietors, paid all claims. Some of them lost very heavily, and a few were crippled in consequence. Previous to this the Bank of Manchester had taken over the business of the Alliance Bank, an institution with which the present bank of that name has no connection. The Alliance Bank of that day, the letters of whose name may still be seen feebly struggling through many coats of white paint on the building in New Brown Street, next door to Marriott's Court, sprang, we believe, from the ashes of the Northern and Central Bank, a concern of considerable pretensions, which had a very brief term of existence, and which had failed some time previously. Like many other human and mundane affairs and institutions, banks which commence business with the most brazen sound of trumpet and free use of the big drum, seem often to turn out the least successful. It is not many years since a notorious bank started in London with a prodigious flourish of trumpets out of doors, the manager inaugurating proceedings inside by holding a prayer meeting with the clerks, and, in a very short time, the bank stopped payment, and the manager was sent to prison. We don't say that the bank failed because the manager had prayers, but the circumstances forcibly remind us of a well-known incident concerning the money changers recorded in a certain book.

The Bank of Manchester resumed business in 1852, in a building in New Brown Street, which has since been adapted to the use of the Post Office money-order department. Formerly it carried on business in the premises now occupied by Mr. H. Barton, stationer. Mr. Farrer, still associated with the Consolidated Bank and previously connected with the old Alliance, was its manager. In 1859, it was converted into a limited liability company, and in 1860, Mr. Joseph Rice, formerly of the Bank of England Branch, was allied to Mr. Farrer in the management. In 1863, the private bank of Heywoods, Kennard, & Co. was amalgamated with the Bank of Manchester, and its name changed to its present title, the Consolidated—a name appropriate and significant enough. Shortly afterwards, it took up the business of another bank, Messrs. Hankeys & Co., of London; and finally, before the event of 1866, already alluded to, occurred, it purchased the Bank of London with its engagements, a step which was the immediate cause of its temporary suspension. With the judgment which dictated that course we have nothing to do. Suffice to say that the bank honourably fulfilled its engagements, and retains the confidence of the public, its shares at the present time standing at a small premium.

The Consolidated Bank has a paid-up capital of £800,000, with a reserve fund of £95,000. It has two branches or agencies. Its chairman is Mr. Pemberton Heywood, of London and Liverpool, who once contested South Lancashire in conjunction with Mr. Gladstone, but was defeated. The directory is composed half of London ex-bankers and merchants and half of Manchester gentlemen. When the London, Liverpool, and Globe Insurance Company built the pile of stone buildings in King Street and Pall Mall, the Consolidated Bank took the Pall Mall portion, No. 1 round the corner. They are unpretending and rather dark offices, in a narrow and badly-lighted street, and we should decidedly prefer seeing them emerge into the daylight of King Street. However, here as in London, they are in close proximity to the Old Lady of Threadneedle Street, which, no doubt, is a convenience in the way of drawing supplies from the vaults of that ancient and opulent dame. Among other vicissitudes and adventures which the Consolidated has experienced, our readers will recollect that, a few years back, it was burglariously entered between Saturday night and Monday morning, and a large amount of money was dexterously extracted from the vault, the thieves walking coolly off with the booty shortly before the doors were opened. The property, however, was as cleverly recovered before the robbers had got further than Crewe. It appears that, if to earnest

and quiet minds "stone walls do not a prison make, nor iron bars a cage," neither can these impediments infallibly prevent expert cracksmen overcoming them and sacking the booty within. Whether the Consolidated Bank had any living creature, man or dog, upon the premises on that night when its safe was rifled, we are not in a position to state. We do know this, however, from practical experience, that the streets between King Street and Market Street, from Mosley Street to Saint Ann's Square, are shamefully lighted, particularly on Sunday evenings, and that they are infested by disreputable characters of both sexes. A friend informs us that, on the Sunday night before the discovery of the robbery, he passed the Consolidated Bank in Pall Mall, and there encountered a suspicious-looking man opposite the building, who followed him into King Street in such a marked manner as to attract his attention. It was, however, so dark that he could not see his face distinctly, although he came to the conclusion that he was not a private watchman. Next morning, when the robbery was announced, the occurrence flashed across his memory. On the trial of the men, this gentleman went down to the court to see if he could identify any of the prisoners in the dock, but this he could not do, and we believe it was never discovered whether they had an accomplice outside or not. This is the only instance of a bank robbery of this nature in Manchester within our recollection, and, from the strength of the vaults and safes now in use and the precautions taken, we don't expect to hear of another.

As we have mentioned above, the different banks are diversified by characteristics peculiar to themselves. It is somewhat singular that people engaged in a certain business or pursuit have a tendency to keep banking accounts at the same place, although sometimes when parties are rivals and competitors, a precisely opposite result is arrived at. Omnium & Co. will not bank with So-and-So, because Ollapod & Co., who may have the same bills, bank there, but, as a rule, vast numbers of people in the same trade have a common banker. Probably, for instance, the District Bank, through its numerous branches, is more identified with the cotton spinning interests of Lancashire, than nearly all the other banks put together. Brooks's and Heywood's divide between them the business of those firms who object to keep their accounts at a joint-stock bank managed by a board of directors. The District Bank is distinguished for its twenty branches and sixteen sub-branches, while the Consolidated has only two establishments, one in Manchester and the other in London The National Provincial is one of one hundred and thirty branches, while the Manchester and Salford has only four or five, and until recently had none at all. This bank since its commencement has pursued such a cautious jog-trot policy, that it earned for itself the title of the "Savings' Bank." It does not divide what it earns among its shareholders in the shape of dividends, but at intervals adds a fractional sum to the respective shares. For this reason, it has been alleged that the Manchester and Salford banks for posterity. The District Bank has some six or seven managing directors and managers in Manchester, while the Manchester and Salford has one managing director and a sub-manager, the Union Bank something of the same kind, the Manchester and County a manager and sub-manager, and the Consolidated Bank has just made Mr. Farrer a managing director, with his late colleague Mr. Rice as manager, and an assistant under him. Brooks's, however, is *sui generis*. Mr. W. C. Brooks is monarch of all he surveys and sole proprietor. Heavens, sole proprietor! We can scarcely realize the idea. No partners, no directors, no colleagues, no botheration. Why he may if he pleases, like Antonio, the merchant of Venice, "lend out money gratis," or even make bad debts and sleep comfortably upon them. We imagine, however, that these are luxuries which W. C. B., M.P., does not frequently indulge in. But we fail to realize the idea of having a palatial building with a lucrative business all to ourselves, and could as soon fancy ourselves the Marquis of Westminster, Lord Bute, or any other territorial magnate. We can only conceive such a state of things in our dreams, like Balfe's song, slightly altered:

I dreamt that I dwelt in marble halls
With vassals and clerks by my side,
And of all who banked within those walls,
I was the hope and the guide.
I had customers many to "sweat"—could boast
A great financial name:
But I also dreamt, which pleas'd me most,
They came to me all the same.

The Consolidated Bank, besides doing a good general business, has a large connection among brokers, and is generally looked upon as the banking representative of the Stock Exchange.

THE JESUIT COLLEGE AT STONEYHURST.

ABOUT forty miles of railway from that execrable Salford Station to Whalley; a peep at the old Abbey and Church; a delightful stroll through green fields, and by the side of hedges fragrant with honeysuckle and almost hidden in clusters of wild roses, pink and white; a lovely water-scene as we cross the Calder, peacefully winding along between fresh green meadows, dotted with cattle; a wooded ascent to Mitton Church-yard, where we sit entranced with the beauty of the valley below, Clitheroe Castle rising to the left, and Pendle bounding the view in front—Pendle, the monarch of Lancashire hills, associated with the chain of beacon fires which bade our sturdy forefathers "to arms!" for the Spanish Armada was at hand, associated, also, with the doings and the deaths of the Lancashire witches, as set forth by our Manchester novelist, Harrison Ainsworth; then along shady lanes, through picturesque nooks, over another water scene, more charming than the first—Hodder new bridge, with the old one crumbling away, beneath a mantle of ivy, to the left, and inviting every lover of the beautiful to come and gaze, if not to sketch; and so to Stoneyhurst.

We are standing now at the entrance to the colony. We say "colony," for what else is Stoneyhurst? Here, to the right, hidden in the trees, is a large building, known as Holder, where some fifty youngsters are being educated prior to their admission into the college itself. In front is the Seminary, another large building, where seventy or eighty candidates for admission into the Jesuit Order are now passing through the required, and to us unknown, course of study and discipline which shall fit them for such admission. Then, to the left, is the huge mass of building which goes by the name of the College—which is, in fact, *the* Stoneyhurst commonly talked about and known to the public generally—the Jesuit Eton, Harrow, and Rugby, all in one; the school so renowned throughout Catholic Europe that pupils are sent to it from France and Spain, and Belgium, and other countries, besides all parts of the United Kingdom; noted for its wonderful system of education, its internal arrangements and external beauties, its playgrounds, gardens, gigantic yew hedges, observatory, libraries, billiard rooms, museum, church—we know not how many things besides! A colony in itself, almost independent of the outside world; making its own clothes and shoes; feeding on the produce of its own farm, the barns and sheds of which lie just at hand; yet, by the way, not so self-dependent as to refuse the supplies of rare wines and other luxuries which (so says well-sustained rumour) find their way to the college from regions remote and near. Simple even to austerity in their own living, the Jesuit Fathers at Stoneyhurst can, nevertheless, furnish an epicurean table for their guests, and feast Lucullus in Lucullan manner. Scattered about on the outskirts of the colony are the cottages of the farm-labourers, and the pretty garden-surrounded houses of certain secular officers of the college—the doctor, dancing master, &c. And this is Stoneyhurst, one of the Seven Wonders of the North! Favoured with a proper introduction, we are bound for the college, expecting much to see and much to profit.

Choosing a path to the left, which takes us past the Seminary, though at some little distance from it, we pass by the farm buildings, and round the garden wall. A minute more and we are at the main entrance—a spacious quadrangle, with the Infirmary on one side, the Chapel—remarkably like King's College Chapel at Cambridge, though smaller—on another, the great stone many-windowed front of the College on the third, and on the fourth a large pond, whereon the boys enjoy capital skating in winter. Standing in the porch, we look through the massive half-opened doors into a cloistered court, with a wide stone-flagged passage running round it. A man-servant receives our cards, and ushers us into a small, plainly-furnished room—the Strangers' Waiting Room, as we afterwards find—hung round with photograms of the College and its gardens. After a short interval a gentleman enters, in a long black cossack and four-cornered cap, or biretta. Nothing can be more courteous and hospitable than his manner. The boys are all at the cricket-

field, it appears. The masters are entertaining a large party of friends at dinner in the great Hall. If we will accept his escort, he will gladly avail himself of the opportunity to escape from the bustle and tedium of this dinner, and show us all that is to be seen. We have an uneasy idea that his politeness is taxed to the very utmost, but, of course, can only express our thankful acquiescence, and follow our leader. Let us say here that our tour of inspection must have taken at least a couple of hours, and that during the whole of this time our guide exerted himself with unwearying kindness to interest and amuse us. We can only express our deep sense of obligation.

The first room we are taken to is the Philosophers' Refectory. The "philosophers" are old pupils who choose to remain in the college, even after they have gone through the usual course of study. There are about fifty of these gentlemen, and need we say that no better proof could be given of the affection which exists between masters and scholars, no surer evidence that Stoneyhurst is not merely a school, but a home also. This refectory, or dining room, is adorned, like the waiting room, with some very beautiful photograms, taken, we are told, by Lord Petre. One of Hodder Old Bridge, and another an exquisite study of leaves and foliage, especially attract our attention. Next we enter the Jesuits' Dining Room, a large, but somewhat scantily furnished apartment; everything in it for use and nothing for show, except some large pictures of saints, and Jesuit fathers of note. From this we are taken up stairs into the First Library or Museum, a noble room, and deserving far more notice than we are able to bestow upon it. Here are MSS. of unknown value; gorgeously illuminated missals, which have occupied the time, we may almost say the lives, of monks whose very homes have long since become shapeless heaps of ruins. Here is the Gospel of St. John written on parchment, which was taken out of the tomb of St. Cuthbert, at Durham; also a rare specimen of the first printing of the first printer—Caxton's *Golden Legende;* also a Sarum Missal, which would delight the heart of an antiquary. Here, again, are treasures of a different sort. We are shown the Prayer-book of Mary, Queen of Scots, the jewel-chest of Queen Christiana of Sweden, the cap and reliquary of Sir Thomas More; cameos from Rome; carvings in wood and ivory too delicate for belief; a magnificent Guido—space forbids us to go on. Go on, however, we have reluctantly to do. We enter what is called the Second Library. Books, books, nothing but books. We are wrong; there is a valuable collection of coins here, including one bearing the effigy and stamp of the Emperor Otho, which is supposed to be rare beyond rarity itself. We confess to dense ignorance on the subject, but gaze with all the admiration we can muster. Thence into the Third Library. Four more walls of books, all of them of a religious character. Breviaries, missals, lives of saints, works in all languages, on all branches of theology; Bibles of every edition, translation, and date, including a copy of the famous "Breeches" Bible, so called from an extraordinary, and we believe inadvertent, translation of Genesis iii., 7, where the word "breeches" was put for "aprons," as it stands now in our version.

And now out into the corridor, and to inspect a beautiful piece of statuary—a Piéta we believe it is called—the Virgin Mother supporting and bending over the dead body of her divine Son. It was placed here by the boys, in memory of one of the Jesuit Fathers—Father Clarke, who for some time ministered at Stoneyhurst. This is not the only evidence of the boys' spontaneous love for their college and masters, as we shall presently see. Their chapel is close by. Elegantly but plainly fitted up, with an altar which strikes us as unusually simple in its decorations. Here the pupils assemble for daily service. This is, we suppose, compulsory attendance; but what shall be said about another chapel, which we enter immediately afterwards—the Sodality Chapel? A certain number of the boys, including many of the "philosophers," have formed themselves into a special guild or society, for the purpose of holding religious services of their own, on certain saints' days and other occasions, and also of observing peculiar rules in their daily life. This is their own private chapel, fitted up at their own cost, and a perfect gem of decoration and beauty. The carving about the stalls, the stained glass, above all, the altar and its ornaments, are alone worth a visit to Stoneyhurst.

Excelsior! We mount again to the Dormitories. Has the reader ever visited Chelsea Hospital?—No? Well then, let him imagine a series of boxes placed against the wall—boxes about 8ft. high, 6ft. wide and 10ft. long (we cannot be exactly certain of these measurements, but they will do); boxes open at the top, and closed in front merely by a curtain. There are 220 of these, and in each of them sleeps a boy. We walked through passage after passage, and room after room, all lined with these sleeping boxes, and opening one into another with so much clear space, and so many windows, as to insure plentiful ventilation; while we have no doubt that, when the curtains are drawn, each box is snug and warm enough for health and comfort. Three prefects, as they are called, have charge of this region, and occupy rooms which open into three different dormitories. It may be simply a joke, but we are told that there is a special dormitory set apart for lads who snore. No sooner is a snorer detected than he is moved off to this portion of the building, and placed among sleepers as musical as himself.

The Philosophers' quarters, which we shortly afterwards visit, are fitted up in very handsome and home-like style. The room in which their billiard table stands is remarkable for a very interesting collection of stuffed birds and geological specimens. The former were contributed by Mr. Waterton, the famous naturalist, whose Indian head-dress stands on one of the tables. Here, also, is a specimen of that wonderful bird, the Apteryx, whose head is so overburdened with brains, or bone, that it has to keep itself erect by placing its beak upon the ground. The Academy Room, which we enter next, is an examination room, concert room, and theatre, all in one. Here the prizes are distributed, the speeches delivered, and various theatrical and musical entertainments given by the pupils, from time to time.

Help us, oh! god or goddess of concisiveness, to describe in few words the labyrinth of school-rooms and play-rooms through which we were now conducted! Something like eight of the former and three of the latter did we visit. Each class-room had its rows of desks, its raised desk in one corner for the prefect, or master; and, let it not be forgotten, its little image of the Virgin, with a lamp burning before it. The way in which their religion seems to be constantly kept before the boys' eyes and minds was especially noticeable. In one of the passages, for instance, was a sort of altar, with a statue of "Our Lady," and ever so many candles burning before it, the voluntary offerings of the boys. The play-rooms were fitted up, two with billiard tables and one with a bagatelle board. The lads are divided into three different sets in play hours, according to their ages, so that all bullying and fagging is next to an impossibility. In wet weather they have all the use of a huge gymnasium, with earthen floor and glass roof, protected from stray balls by grating underneath. Here they can play at cricket, football, what they will, dry-foot and dry-headed, let the elements be as unpropitious as they may. In the corridors which adjoin the School-rooms we noticed places for boots, heated by hot-water pipes, so that, no matter how wet the lads' shoes may get, they are dried almost directly, and fit for blacking, or use, again. Also, the arrangements in the Lavatories were most excellent, a continuous stream of water running from each of many pipes, and, as our guide remarked, "When you once get used to wash in running water, you don't care for a stagnant basinful." There was a strong smell of scented soap, by the way, in this region.

Let us not forget the Music Room—the greatest curiosity of all: eight rooms in one! Eight glass compartments, entirely separated from one another, with a centre avenue, up and down which the master can walk, and see his eight pupils all hard at work, strumming away at eight pianos, without hearing or disturbing one another! Wonderful people these Jesuit Fathers! We were on our way to the great Chapel, the Parish Church as we believe it is called, when we visited this room. The Church lies at the end of a long covered gallery. Over the doorway is a statue of St. Aloysius, the tutelary Saint of the young, dressed in cassock and short white cotta, lily in hand, and bending down in attitude of benediction. Our adjectives fail us altogether in describing the Church itself. It is one mass of decoration from end to end, and yet all the colours are in admirable keeping and harmony. The high altar is gorgeous in the extreme, with large gilt candlesticks, and gilding everywhere. The walls are completely covered with frescoes and stencilling. Over one of the side altars is a large oil painting of St. Francis Xavier, preaching to the Indians; over another is a companion picture of St. Ignatius, admitting the first band of Jesuits to the Holy Communion. The stained glass windows are very fine. Enough! The whole edifice is admirably suited for the ornate ritual which is practised in it.

So much for the interior of Stoneyhurst College. So much! We should rather say so little; but we must pass in to the Play-ground and Gardens. The former is spacious enough for more than the two hundred boys who play upon it. There is plenty of room and to spare. We notice some curious blocks of stone lying about. "These," observes our guide, "are for Stoneyhurst cricket"—a sort of knur and spell so far as we can make out, played with a small hand-bat and ordinary cricket ball.

Everybody has heard of the famous yew hedges of Stoneyhurst. If not, he ought to have done. They are, we should think, from eight to ten feet high, and quite as broad—thick, compact, walls of green. We walked between them, past gay parterres of flowers, to the Observatory, where calculations as to wind and rain, heat and cold, and all things scientific, are daily made by one of the Jesuit Fathers. We visited the Kitchen Garden, the Philosophers' Bowling Green, and the fatal Yew Walk, where the last male heir of the Sherborne family plucked and eat the yew berries which caused his death, and delivered the house (as it then stood) and the estate into the hands of his sister, who again delivered them over to the possession of the Jesuits from henceforth and for ever. We doubt whether it be very Protestant-like to say it, but we also very much doubt whether better use could have been made of the gift, than that which we have just witnessed.

TOWN TALK,

AND THINGS IN GENERAL.

SECRETS OF THE PIANOFORTE TRADE.

FOR about ten days, and until Wednesday in last week, the following advertisement occupied a prominent place in the second column of the one or more of the Manchester daily papers:

A Lady, previous to leaving Manchester, is desirous of Selling her PIANO, a beautiful rich-tone seven-octave semi-cottage, in fine Italian walnut, repetition touch, extra bracings for extreme climates, registered keyboard by Collard, very little used: 27gs. will be taken; worth 60gs.—Mrs. H.——

"Mrs. H." gave as her address a street in Greenheys, and "previous to leaving Manchester" was successful beyond her most sanguine anticipations. She not only managed to dispose of the instrument described in the advertisement, but of a good many more—as many as eleven pianos, all identical in make and value having, we are informed, been sold at this house in Greenheys in the course of one week. After this, it is almost needless to explain (what our readers will already suspect), that the lady leaving Manchester was in reality a London firm of pianoforte makers, who had brought a selection of their wares here and had adopted this *ruse* in order to get them off their hands. We have their names, but for obvious reasons decline to give them publicity. The piano which they offered for twenty-seven guineas and asserted to be worth sixty, was enclosed indeed in a sixty guinea case; but the value of the inside was not more than £18, and the instrument was such an one as is ordinarily sold by music dealers for twenty-four or twenty-five pounds. Will any of the eleven purchasers inform us, after this revelation, whether

The pleasure is as great
Of being cheated as to cheat

THE CLUBS.

Another new club in Manchester. The Brazenose has taken possession of its rooms, held its first general meeting, and elected a committee of management this week. This latest accession to the list of our local clubs is designed to promote the association of gentlemen of the literary, scientific and artistic professions, and is to consist of two hundred ordinary and fifty country members. The rooms are in Brazenose Street, and the title chosen for the club has been partly suggested by the locality, partly adopted as a tribute to the college at Oxford which has for so long a time been associated with the learned institutions of this city and county. For the names already on the roll of members, we should say that few institutions of the kind in Manchester have started with a better prospect of permanence and prosperity. The Conservative Club, in St. James's Square, has not yet got into still waters. In fact, its difficulties appear to be chronic. The financial accounts of the first year showed a deficit of about eight hundred pounds, which had to be made good by a call upon all the members, over and above the subscription fixed at the outset. In addition to this, the commissariat department has been a constant source of trouble. At first, the club had its own manager. Then it let the catering to a manager who was willing to pay a considerable sum for the privilege. This, again, has not proved entirely satisfactory, and during the week a meeting has been held to consider which of the plans shall be adopted in future, when the result of a lengthy discussion only served to show that the views of the majority of the members are entirely at variance with those of the executive committee. The solution of the difficulty has been relegated to the final decision of the committee, but with such restrictions and conditions as amount almost to a vote of want of confidence in the wisdom of the governing power. It is worthy of note that the Reform Club and the Freemason's Club are both able to make ends meet, and even to obtain a profit on the provisioning of their members—a secret which would be worth a good deal to the Conservative Club if it could only find it out.

TROOPS FOR IRELAND.

The King's Dragoon Guards, who have been stationed in Manchester for many months past, received orders from London on Monday to hold themselves in readiness to embark for Ireland on Friday (yesterday). Two infantry regiments—the 80th, now at Fleetwood, and (we believe) the 40th, now at Carlisle—are also under orders for the same destination. The latter will be replaced by the 35th regiment and the first battalion of the 12th, from Aldershot; we have not heard who are to be the successors of the King's Dragoon Guards at Manchester. Military journals in London appear anxious to assure us that this movement of troops from England to Ireland is a mere matter of routine, but the statement is hardly borne out by the facts, so far as they are known. In making changes to meet the customary reliefs, it is not usual to send an order so suddenly or so unexpectedly as the one received on Monday in Manchester, by the colonel of the King's Dragoon Guards; nor do the strength and number of the reinforcements now proceeding to Ireland at all correspond with the self-complacent assurances of certain metropolitan journals. Upon one thing men of every party are agreed—that it is quite time Government made up its mind to end the state of lawlessness which for some time past has prevailed in Ireland, and to overawe what is probably the most contemptible body of conspirators that ever was permitted to disturb the peace of a great nation.

BEHIND THE BARRIER AT HALLE'S CONCERTS.

DEAR SPHINX,—Were you ever behind the barrier at Mr. Hallé's concerts? I imagine not; for, when you wrote those admirable critiques of last season (which, by the way, I miss from your pages now), I think you must have sat in the reserved seats or the gallery. The fixedness of attention required to produce those masterly analyses of the music could only be got in a state of perfect repose, and that is hardly obtainable in the space behind the barrier. Music is one of the luxuries with which I like to fill up the pauses of a business life, but I find it necessary to use a wise economy in the indulgence of it. It is, therefore, my custom occasionally on Thursday evenings during the season, to deposit a modest shilling at one of the doors of the Free Trade Hall, and take my place among those who congregate in what is commonly known as the area. Apart from the reason already stated, I do not know, could I afford it, that I would choose to go elsewhere. No fox and grapes philosophy in this, dear *Sphinx*, I can assure you. I have luxuriated on cushioned seats among the Upper Ten; I have mingled with the middle-class gentility of the gallery; but I like best the Bohemian liberty which reigns behind the barrier. As some one has said, there is an intensity of life and *moral* heat in a crowd, and so I prefer the pit at the theatre, the gallery at the opera, and the area at the concert.

The barrier at Mr. Hallé's concerts, as you are aware, is the strong line of demarcation which separates Belgravia from Bohemia. To maintain the distinction it is found necessary to employ the constable, which is a fact in itself suggestive. It implies possible disorder, or an invasion of rights, and impresses one pretty much in the same way as when in the gallery of the theatre at the opera, one reads the notice inscribed there for the benefit of the usual occupants, that "one pound

reward" will be given for the conviction of any offender who may commit a breach of the peace, or interfere with the comfort of the house. In other ways we in the area are made to feel our subordinate position. Year by year the space allotted to us has grown small by degrees and *not* beautifully less, so that if, in the future, the tide of fashion shall advance in the same ratio as in the past, we may cease to exist altogether as a body, and be driven out into the cold. This seems ungrateful; we have always been warm and ardent supporters of Mr. Hallé, and perhaps not the least appreciative of his audience. However,

Money's King, and vivat Rex;

for the shilling devotee of art must give place and go to the wall when his richer brother, however stupid, comes with seven shillings and sixpence to drive him there.

The provision of seats behind the barrier is of the most limited description, and those who occupy them are the fortunate minority. It requires some devotion to music to induce one to stand during two hours and a half to listen to it; and I take it, therefore, as an evidence of no small appreciation that so many will be found to undergo the ordeal. I have hinted that, perhaps, we behind the barrier are not the least critical of the audience, and I suspect, from my own observation, that, like the pit of the theatre, the real verdict of opinion comes from the area. It is in the hearty outburst of bravos and the striking together of strong palms, more than in the light tapping of gloved fingers, that the real expression of opinion is conveyed.

Bohemia behind the barriers is eminently critical of Belgravia within it. During the half hour or so before the commencement of the concert, as the long procession of fashionables in full evening dress files into the reserved seats, the individuals who form it are criticized in a manner and with a freedom that would astonish those who are made the subjects, did they hear it. Dress, manner, character, private or public position, all come in for a share of notice and remark. Without eavesdropping, one may hear much scandal talked, and learn a great deal of the private histories of these occupants of the reserved seats. Leaning on my accustomed place against the barrier, I have had much information of a personal nature volunteered to me. It is one of the penalties of greatness to become the cynosure of neighbouring and critical eyes. "There," says a garrulous friend at my elbow, "is the celebrated Mr. Bullion, the eminent banker, with his wife and daughters." I take a mental photograph of this interesting family group, and place it in the portrait gallery of memory. There, again, is another notable individual, a character in his way, who is familiarly alluded to as "Chops and Steaks," from the fact that he has gained honourable fame and a fortune by his remarkable culinary talent, which he possesses along with a real taste for music. Here, too, comes a less pleasing personage to look upon, a confirmed *roué* and man-about-town, who, if he had been born to the possession of land and a title instead of a warehouse and grey shirtings, would have been a Marquis of Steyne. Following him is an effeminate-looking individual, a professor of his art, who is said to be so devoted to music that he lives on it, with an occasional sniff at a scent bottle by way of revival. Here, again, is a worthy alderman of boundless ambition, whose domestic affairs, to judge from the comments one hears made upon them, seem to be public property. There, succeeding him, is a dandy of the first water, a type of many present, a curled and starched darling in all the glory of dress coat and gilt buttons, one

Whose barbarous opulence, jewel-thick,
Suns itself on his breast and hands.

Here is an eminent popular dissenting preacher, with delicate, thoughtful face, and wild spirituelle eyes. Close following him is a Roman Catholic priest; then a young barrister who has achieved notoriety as the champion of Miss Becker and woman's rights. So they pass in, the representatives of wealth or intelligence, with the usual admixture of parvenus and fops.

The ladies, however, are the chief attraction for the Bohemians. Regarding the beauty of the fair occupants of these seats, there seems to be a prevailing opinion that the claimants to that distinction are rare, and that the present season is a remarkable one in this respect. "Where," says a tall Hibernian at my elbow, "will you see in civilized Europe an equal assemblage of women with so little of beauty among them. For fine girls I advise you to go to the theatre at Dublin, &c." Nevertheless, it is pleasant to look upon the gaiety and beauty of form and colour within the barrier. There are notable exceptions, moreover, to the general rule of plainness. Here and there one's eye lights upon some fair Maud who "feeds on the roses and lays on the lilies of life," a very "queen rose of this rosebud garden of girls." Each season has its belle, who is the centre of attraction. "There," says one standing by, "is the Duchess. It is her second season, and she has not gone off yet." The Duchess, a slim, tall girl, clad in white, with a profusion of lace and flowers, and accompanied by a grim dowager, is for the time being receiving the attentions of the curate of a neighbouring church. One hears much chivalrous admiration and diversity of opinion expressed respecting these fair ones by ardent youths who come to gaze on their beauty.

But it is time to say something of the music. The members of the orchestra take their places, and along with them the chief magician, whose magic wand is to wake voluptuous strains from the tuneful instruments. And now it is well if one can shut one's eyes to all surrounding objects and listen. To enjoy these concerts, it is not necessary to have any critical knowledge of music, though the possession of it is an advantage. For my own part, my musical tastes are of a somewhat anomalous character. I am one of those who estimate harmonious sounds entirely by their influence on the feelings, being unable, did I desire it, to apply any other criticism than this. The pleasure I derive from music is often mysterious and paradoxical to myself. A simple ballad will often affect me more than the most complicated and brilliant concerto, and I have known myself thrown into a pleasant reverie by the strains of a barrel organ. As Sir Thomas Brown says, in his *Religio Medici*, "even that vulgar and tavern music which makes one one man merry, another mad, strikes in me a deep fit of devotion." I value music, and am influenced by it, because, as Sir Thomas further says, "there is something in it of divinity more than the ear discovers." I believe, too, with Mr. Carlyle, that "it is the speech of the angels, and nothing among the utterances allowed to man is felt to be so divine. It brings us nearer the Infinite. We look for moments, across the cloudy elements, into the Sea of Light, when song leads and inspires us." In this respect I doubt not I differ little from the majority of those who attend these concerts. It is given to few to possess that keen intellectual analytical faculty which can dissect music, and trace subtle harmonies. It is possible for one to feel an influence from music without being able to account for it, as one may feel the influence of a beautiful face without being acquainted with its anatomy or the laws by which it exists. A man of culture may get at the ideas of a great composer without any technical knowledge of the art by which they are conveyed. Listening to some of the complicated and magnificent overtures I have heard at these concerts, I have been able to realize the beauty of that old Greek myth regarding the creation of Venus from the sea foam, as out of the storm and tempest and wild commotion of sound the spirit of the piece has shaped itself, clear and distinct, before the mental vision. Vocal music is easier to understand; it bears with it, in the spoken language, its own interpretation. Listening to Titiens or Sinico, I have often been reminded, in the influence of their voices, of the English Opium Eater's description of his own feelings, at the opera, when hearing Grassini. "Thrilling was the pleasure with which, almost always, I heard this angelic Grassini. Shivering with expectation I sat, when the time drew near for her golden epiphany; shivering I rose from my seat, incapable of rest, when that heavenly and harp-like voice sang its own victorious welcome in its prelusive threttanello—threttánello."

After all, true insight into music, as in other forms of art, depends upon culture. The other evening I had an amusing evidence of the different effect with which the waves of sound strike upon the various tympanums of those who listen. It was on the occasion of the performance of Rossini's Grand Mass. I stood in my accustomed place against the barrier, and in close proximity to the policeman who kept guard within it. A kind friend was endeavouring to enlighten the gentleman in blue regarding the music. The effect was vain. The poor fellow expressed his utter bewilderment at the whole performance. The words were a mystery to him; the sounds equally so. He frankly confessed that it was no pleasure to him to be present, and that he would rather be on duty outside.

Let me conclude these rambling thoughts from behind the barrier with an expression of grateful thanks to the originator and conductor of these concerts, to whom I am largely indebted for an inexpensive intellectual luxury.—I am, dear *Sphinx*, yours truly,

A BOHEMIAN.

ONE OF OUR SUBURBS.

IS it not Wordsworth, the poet of the humbler, as of what we call the nobler things of life and nature, who, in one of his fine sonnets, beautifully rebukes those who consider too curiously

The nicely calculated less or more?

In our days the appetite for mere vastness has been developed so abnormally that we can scarcely be prevailed upon to bestow any attention on what may happen to lack the element of bigness. It is not Jack the Giant Killer that we so much care about. It is the Giant himself before whom we are in the habit of prostrating ourselves. To be sure, Jack secures some passing admiration on account of his preternatural prowess in decapitating the overgrown monster who is always bellowing for butcher's meat, but the schoolboys of our time, corrupted by the common worship of the huge and the unwieldy, would, we think (but for his talent in cutting off the head of a great bogey who might not impossibly dine upon *them*, if he had been permitted to survive), rather despise Jack for his unfashionable smallness. These, indeed, are not the days of little things. It is the enormous gooseberry that carries all before it.

So in the newspaper world. Take the article of news, for instance. How many of us care for anything of less gigantic importance than the Suez Canal, or a speech of the Emperor, or an Æcumenical Council, or a bill for the disestablishment of the Irish Church, or a measure for the revolution of the tenure of the land of a whole nation? This is a mistake to be corrected. Believe us, excellent Othello, it is not alone "the big wars that make ambition virtue." For our own part we like to descend to particulars. Like Autolycus, we do not disdain "the unconsidered trifles." We like to read in a newspaper, not merely the formidable reports of parliamentary battles, but also the accounts, sometimes vouchsafed to us, of the fisticuffs of village politicians. We enjoy, with the enjoyment proper to it, the chronicle of small beer.

We were set musing in this fashion the other day by a quiet little saunter over the column or two of suburban news furnished by a Manchester weekly contemporary. Our esteemed *collaborateur*, besides supplying the public with a judiciously chosen summary of the "city news" of the week, goes considerably farther afield, and garners up for Manchester the otherwise unchronicled incidents of suburban life. Instead of churlishly sticking to the city, our enterprizing purveyor of intelligence goes farther and (we had almost said) fares better. This suburban news instructs the public as to the importance of little things. To begin with, it provides mankind with a new temptation to the study of local geography. It is all very well to know "who's who," but it is scarcely of less consequence to know "where's where." It is not every home-keeping youth in Manchester who, were you even to pummel him in default, could make an affidavit that he knew within five and twenty miles where Besses-o'th'-Barn is. Then again, where's Irlam's-o'th'-Height? We pause for a reply—and we don't get it. One ought to have Besses-o'th'-Barn and Irlam's-o'th'-Height, as it were, at the ends of one's fingers, but we haven't. The public may well deplore the inadequacy of the means for primary instruction. If knowledge like this isn't primary, what is? We say again, that the study of suburban history is calculated to promote a desire, a longing, as it were a passion, for wanting to know where our suburbs are in the habit of putting themselves. What's the use of bothering your head about the use of the globes, unless the globes contrive to make you acquainted with the whereabouts of such a geographical conglomerate as "Boston Wrigleyhead Failsworth?" We confess that, for the first time in a prolonged journalistic existence, have we experienced a burning desire to learn where "Boston Wrigleyhead Failsworth" is. Obviously, there are other worlds to conquer, and another little difficulty awaits the courage of Livingstone when he reappears in Europe.

In the meantime, thanks to the adventurous gentleman of the press who appears to have added this suburb to the already considerable acquisitions of geographical discovery, we are permitted (per favour of the *City News*) to get a glimpse of some of the peculiarities of the Boston Wrigley Head Failsworth aborigines. It is difficult to believe, perhaps, but it positively appears as if this distant tribe had a dim notion of what a "local board" was! How has this startling notion contrived to penetrate so far? The late Mr. Buckle could tell us (or could have told us) whether the notion of a local board hovering about B. W. H. F. is spontaneous, or simultaneous, or is the result of unrecorded missionary enterprise. No matter. It is enough to say that they have achieved the elevating suspicion that it is one of the functions of a local board to do something with gas. Now, to suspect the existence of gas seems to us almost equivalent to the Red man making the discovery of whisky—and liking it. Gas almost prepares one to hear that the B. W. H. F. are engaged in the arduous struggle to communicate their ideas to a rather more civilived society by the agency of written speech. We are indebted to the journal we have mentioned for the copy of a recent specimen. It will be observed that the language bears a certain vague resemblance to the renowned inscription discovered by the late Mr. Pickwick, and which, it will be remembered, some illiterate scoffer interpreted into "Bill Stumps His mark." The specimen, which we subjoin, found its way, a few days ago, into the hands of what is called the Failsworth Local Board, a distant sanhedrim whose name appears to have some unexplained affinity with the initials quoted. The *City News* stenographer using the language to which he is probably accustomed, remarks that this interesting scroll "was read with much difficulty by the chairman," for whom it is supposed to be designed by the interesting and—we should imagine—pleasantly-tattooed aborigine:

We, the reatpayers of Boston Wrigleyhead Failsworth, we desire that you will be kind enough to let us have a lamp fixt againe a house hend or where you think the best place his to do the most good we think it wants one very badly for the are 14 houses that that would be benefited by it for it his very bad on dark knights. Som have fawlen and som hurt themselves aganst the flags and to mend the roads for the are very dirty up to Boston for it as been talked about a long time and a great deal of grumbling.—Decr. 1st, 1869.

The personages to whom this curious and "early" document is supposed to be sent have come to the courageous conclusion that they can form some faint conjecture as to its meaning. It is stated that "it was decided, that if there were gas mains in the place, to grant the prayer of the petitioners, but it appeared to be the general impression that the mains did not yet reach this somewhat out of the way place." "Out of the way place," indeed! One can well understand the facetiously expressed impression that "the mains did not reach" Bostonwrigleyheadfailsworth. Do they reach to the Man in the Moon? After all, there must be something in common between the framers of this literary mystery and the "local Board" that doesn't know where its mains go. It occurs to us that "The Suburbs" of the *City News* may repay further exploration.

THE COURT OF RECORD.

THE Court which used to go by this name, or, in full, the Court of Record for the trial of civil actions within the City of Manchester, is perhaps the least known and least understood of our local courts of law. In its old form it exists no longer. It has absorbed or assimilated the Salford Hundred Court, and its jurisdiction, instead of being confined to city bounds, now extends generally all over that south-eastern division of the county called the Salford Hundred. It is by no means an admirable institution. It is a cumbrous and costly, a complicated, superfluous, and expensive piece of legal machinery; it is incapable of amendment, and ought, in the public interests, to be swiftly and utterly abolished.

The Judges of the court—for there are two, Mr. Joseph Kay, and Mr. Henry Wyndham West, M.P., the Recorder of Manchester, who do not sit together, like the two kings of Brentford, but occupy the judicial bench in turns—concluded their business for the present year last week. The hall in Strangeways, where they hold their sittings, presents a very different appearance to that which meets the eye of the visitor during the period of the assizes. No red-coated sheriff's officers, or gay marshal-men, or trumpeters; no troops of smartly dressed ladies, escorted by some juvenile barrister airing his new wig; only a few policemen, and the sadly maimed but always cheerful watchman, by way of officialism. Even the book-stall is empty. A few common-looking folks are wandering aimlessly about in this "hall of lost footsteps;" and some lawyers' clerks, pale, lean, and unhealthy of aspect, flit from group to group, like vultures troubled with a superabundance of prey. Entering the hall called at assize time the Nisi Prius Court let us watch the course of procedure. No jury, no barristers, only an attorney or two, and the plaintiff or defendant, in a sort of rostrum, with the Judge talking to them all by turns—surely we have got into

the County Court by mistake. No: it appears that the Judge here, by an accident of legislation we are inclined to think, exercises just the same powers as a County Court Judge upon what are variously called fraud, or judgment, or commitment, summonses. When these are over, a troop of some twenty or thirty "gentlemen of the long robe" (phrase dear to journalism), duly attired, walk in and occupy benches vis-a-vis the Judge. Whereupon, seeing the Judge rise, all rise and gravely bow to him, and he gravely bows in return. The Jury are sworn, and business is begun by the cases entered for trial being called over, and, by a process of weeding ont which it would be of no interest to the general reader to detail, the actions which are to be really tried are arrived at. The Jury have been, up to this time, merely on bowing terms with the Judge, and have "swore terribly" at the bidding of a neat, prim, and business-like little man, sitting under the Judge. He is the Deputy-Registrar of the court. His principal, as a yarn agent would say, is far too much of a magnifico to be seen here, so Mr. Mountain comes instead, "by order, Jos. Heron."

But now, hearing "John Styles against Thomas Nokes" called out, a good-tempered man, with a well-bronzed complexion, looking more like the Captain of the Persia than a "counsel learned in law," gets up and says that he appears for the plaintiff. Another of the row rises—this time a large man with a smooth-shaven, pale face, with the dark eyes of the Celtic race, and an ever-changing play of the mouth, suggestive at once of the Jesuit and the orator. He says he is for the defendant, and then looks about for his client, or his client's friends. The first one, while opening the papers that relate to the case (and whom, for our present purpose, we will call Mr. Redress), makes some kind of apologetic remark to the Judge and then to the Jury, but, not apparently satisfied with what he is saying, cuts it off short and begins afresh, in what seems to be the middle of a sentence, and gets safely through. On he goes in this manner, with a little help from a short dry cough and many hums and ha's, till one thinks it a pity he could not have prepared his speech beforehand. In about ten minutes, however, he comes to an end; at least he stops, and, though it does not look like the end, it all at once comes across you that, somehow or other, you have a very good notion of the plaintiff's version of the story. Mr. Redress then has his witness up, and elicits from him, perhaps, part of what he stated in his speech. Then the defendant's counsel gets up, and, after a few quietly-put questions, gradually raises his voice, and lets the Hibernian accent out of the bag.

This learned gentleman (whom we may call Mr. Brutus) is careful to attack every witness that "me friend" has had up, and then saying that he shall have no witnesses on his own side (else he could'nt have the last word, as he well knows) he composes himself for his speech. He has the facile utterance of his countrymen, and disdains not to make a set oration out of the very slightest materials. Every little inexactness or uncertainty of expression that he has been able to scrape out of the witnesses' examination, every undecided or dubious expression, are the straws with which he makes the bricks of his argument hold together; and if they could by action, shouting, and desk thumping, be firmly built and settled into a wall of conviction on which the Jury might rest, the fabric might stand. The Judge, however, coldly and almost cruelly, you think, reads over to the Jury the evidence which the witnesses have given, and shows the wall to be daubed with untempered mortar; and, with a very few plain words about the aforesaid straws, lets the Jury see pretty clearly what his opinion would be if he were one of them. No very long time after which our precise little friend asks them if their verdict is for the plaintiff or the defendant, and the Foreman, almost unnecessarily, one thinks, says for the plaintiff So much, in £ s. d., and the man who seemed unable to put ten words in consecutive order has won the day. Mr. Redress certainly is "no orator as Brutus is," but he has a plain way of dealing with plain facts, and he contrives sooner or later to make people see what he is driving at. Mr. Brutus has, if we mistake not, worn the political "sock" as well as the forsenic "buskin," and, in company with Windbag, mounted the "Reform" stump, in the room over the grocer's in Market Street, as well as in the neighbouring towns.

In the next case we find two other counsel pitted against one another. In one we have the solitary member of the bar which has been punished by the Manchester press. He is a hearty, thoroughly English-looking man, plump in form, and gradually getting plumper. He addresses the Jury in accents rich with the Manchester Doric, and though not often fortunate when he essays a poetical quotation, he knows better than to wander into the regions of simile or the fields of metaphor, and "will a plain unvarnished tale deliver." His high opinion of the letter H leads him to leave it to take care of itself, but he speaks the language and says just the things which a Jury of ironmongers' clerks and waste dealers would use if any of them were in his place. They understand him and he understands them, and so if they can possibly give him their verdict they do. Quite of an opposite kind is his opponent, a thin wiry man. He, like Brutus, comes with the lore and the manners of the quarter sessions, and, while assiduously deferential in manner to the Jury, seems to think it a wise and prudent thing to be constantly bickering with the Judge about matters as to which any of the lean and hungry youths we left in the hall would set him right. Perhaps he knows well enough, and it is a mere artifice for the Jury; who can tell? He can generally count an odd brief to his opponent's dozen. There must be something in him, however, or we should not see or hear of him being employed so much in the sessions courts.

So far we have only spoken of the court as a try-cause instrument. Let us now look at another part of the works, the cost-making machinery. Previous to the summer of 1846, there were numerous little courts of ancient date for the recovery of sums under 40s. If you wanted more than that, you had to go to a lawyer and get a writ from the Court of Queen's Bench in London, or a court of about equal expense, called the Common Pleas, at Lancaster, which had its office at Preston; and if you got your money without paying half to your lawyer, or losing it and the expenses besides, you were lucky beyond example. In this summer of 1846, the County Court was established, providing cheap and prompt means of getting in your money, if you did not want more than £20 from anybody. If you did, you must either forego the overplus or "writ as before." The £20 was, with much groaning of attorneys, especially the London agent, made £50; and now, with slight exception, you may, at a very moderate expense, have a strictly fair trial in the County Court, on a fixed day, for anything for which you have a claim. But this didn't at all suit our old friend Vested Interests. The old 40s. court or wapentake of Salford Hundred, or rather the officials who received the fees and emoluments, went to Parliament on behalf of their "Diana of the Ephesians," and got it enlarged into a Court of Record, with writs, declarations, pleas, demurrers, and all the paraphernalia of the Queen's Bench, with jurisdiction to £50, and a scale of costs framed after that of the superior courts. This was to extend all over the Hundred, except the city of Manchester, which already had a court of a similar kind, a few years older in date. These two courts were last year amalgamated and one court constituted, of which the short title is, the Salford Hundred Court.

In all these changes there was no simplifying, except of the squeezing power, but all the old procedure of the courts was brought into play, to make "going to law" more dilatory and uncertain than it need be, and at least six times more expensive. While the County Court exists, this court, as at present constituted, has no *raison d'etre*. It is merely a costs-making machine, and has no arm which the County Court does not wield far more cheaply, dexterously, and speedily. Its prolonged existence is due to a mistaken regard for vested interests in opposition to the public interest; and the sooner the officials are pensioned off, and the court abolished, the better will it be for all.

Within the last few days, the Common Pleas at Lancaster, like a brachiopod, has extended one of its arms, with a sucker, to Manchester, and has appointed a local Registrar here. Surely the course of legislation is running backward!

MR. TENNYSON.

The recent discussions on Mr. Tennyson's poetry has recalled to mind an amusing passage in a little known biographical sketch of Mr. Alexander Smith, published some years ago, in which the author gives some illustrations of the critical opinions of a Glasgow poet, Mr. Macdonald. Mr. Macdonald was a fanatic about Burns, whilst his contempt for Tennyson was extreme. Once, our author tells us, he took "Airy, fairy, Lilian" as an example of his position. Working his Scotch with vigour, and carefully emphasizing any weak points, he excited his hearers to uncontrollable laughter. Then he exclaimed, "Laugh awa', lads. Deed ye may well laugh at him. Oh, but it's wersh, wersh, that kin of thing to put beside the like o' Rabbie! I tell't ye he was nae poet." But he could occasionally see a merit in Tennyson, and gave him credit as a close observer of nature. Once, as he and Alexander Smith and another were walking quietly along a stretch of the river side, he suddenly broke out—

> Why lingers she to clothe her heart with love?
> Delaying, as the tender ash delays,
> To clothe herself when all the woods are green.

"Ye mind that, Sandy," he continued; "it's in *The Princess*; an' noo, look ye, *that's* an ash"—pointing with his stick—"maybe ye think it's an ash; and deil a leaf on it see ye na? An' a' the ither trees are out. I didna need ony o' ye Tennyson's to tell me that; but neither o' ye kent it, I reckon. He's nae poet, I'll aye say that; but I'se alloo ye'll not often find him wrang wi' his flooers, an' his trees, an' things; *he* kens them, Sandy, an' *ye* dinna."

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Ticket holders will be admitted at Six o'clock.

THE DESERTED CHURCHES IN SALFORD.

THE following in reference to Sacred Trinity Church, Salford, is from the *Salford Weekly News* of November 27th and December 4th:

The long-pending controversy between the rector of Trinity Church and the trustees of the Booth's Charity appears at last to be taking a step forward. This matter has now been in Chancery about six years, and a final decision seems to be approaching. We hear that an order has been drawn up, which, so far as the ambiguous language of a legal document can be understood, shows, as the result of this long-contested matter, that the trustees are to advance out of their trust funds the sum of £3,800 towards the rebuilding of a new church. This is the result of a compromise, and has been arrived at as the proper sum to be paid towards a new church, based on the calculation of competent architects, as the sum it would cost to repair the existing church and build a new tower. By the decision of the court, the rector is entitled out of this sum to take a portion of the costs of the enquiry since the hearing in May, 1866. On the other hand he is to find substantial security that a sum of not less than £5,000 shall be forthcoming for the rebuilding of a new church. To accomplish this, it would be necessary for the rector of Trinity Church to obtain from the Lord Bishop of Manchester a faculty or authority to take down the present church, and give an undertaking satisfactory to the bishop that a new church shall be built in accordance with plans and specifications to be approved of. Power is given to the trustees, if they have not sufficient funds in hand, to mortgage their trust estate, so as to raise the amount agreed to be advanced by them—viz., £3,800. If this order is satisfactory to the rector, the trustees, and the inhabitants of the borough, the matter will now go forward; but it is competent for each of the parties interested—that is, the rector, the trustees, and the inhabitants—to appeal against the order, so as to obtain one more in accordance with their wishes. The rector and trustees are each represented by their separate counsel, and the inhabitants can only be represented by laying their case before the Attorney-General.

To the Editor of the Salford Weekly News.

Sir,—I was surprised to read the paragraph in your last issue. I do not know upon what authority it was presented, but it is erroneous. So far from these unfortunate proceedings being in a more favourable condition, the Attorney-General has given instructions to appeal against the orders referred to, and to oppose to the utmost the building of a new church from the funds of the charity. This object, as you know, has been unanimously condemned in Salford as unjust, and is, I believe, if possible, more than ever unnecessary, the congregation, on the authority of a popular local periodical, amounting only to something like fifty persons at each service.—Yours, &c., WM. WARBURTON,
Hon. Sec. to the Committee appointed
Salford, Dec. 3, 1869. by Inhabitants.

ACTORS v. DOCTORS.—Amongst young Sheridan's schoolfellows was the son of a physician, who boasted that his father was a gentleman professionally attending the nobility. "And so is my father,—and as good as yours any day," said Sheridan. "Ah, but your father is an actor, Dick," said the doctor's son; "therefore it is impossible that he can be a gentleman." —"You may think so," rejoined Sheridan, "but I don't; for your father kills people, while mine only amuses them."

TO READERS AND CORRESPONDENTS.

BEER v. TEETOTALISM.—We have received from Mr. J. Livesey, of Preston, a rejoinder to the letter of Mr. Fielden, M.P., but we have not space for it at present, nor, indeed, can we promise it insertion at any future time.

S. D. L.—Declined, with thanks.

CROWQUILL.—The phrase "no Manchester men need apply," in the advertisement for an assistant master, is not, we believe, used in the same invidious and derogatory sense as "no Irish need apply." It is merely indicative of a custom common to the legal as well as the scholastic profession—a kind of professional trades-unionism, in fact.

RECEIVED. — Our Sanitary Improvements; J. M'M., Glasgow.

Communications should be addressed to the Editor, *Sphinx* Office, 37, Oxford Street, Manchester. Every manuscript should bear the name and address of the sender. All contributions are attentively considered, and unaccepted MSS. are returned on receipt of stamps for postage. No replies or MSS. can be delivered on personal application.

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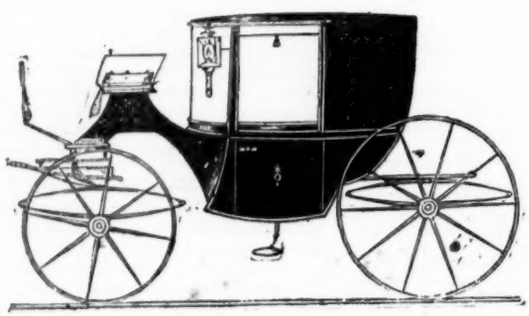

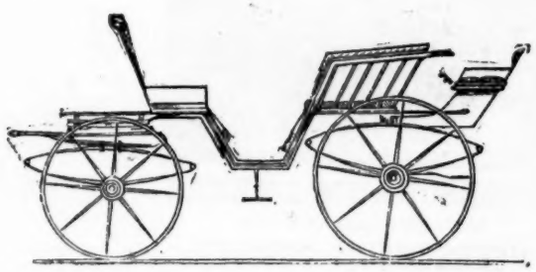

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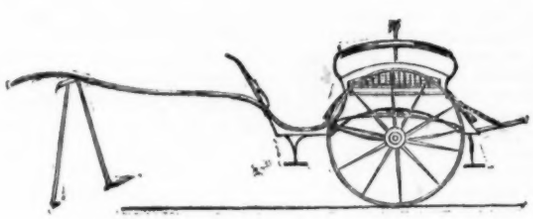

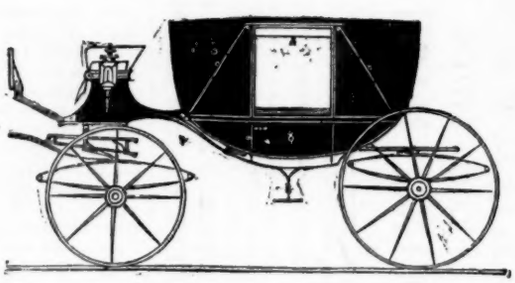

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OF OHIO, EX-MEMBER OF THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS,

Now upon a visit to this country.

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Dr. BREWER, M.P., London.
Dr. MUNROE, F.L.S., Hull.
Rev. W. McKERROW, D.D.
Rev. CHARLES GARRETT.
Rev. CANON TOOLE.
Rev. ALFRED JONES.
JAMES BOYD, Esq.
WILLIAM HOYLE, Esq.
JAMES H. RAPER, Esq.
And others.

The CHAIR will be taken by

BENJAMIN WHITWORTH, Esq., J.P.

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